

The business of SIM management for vehicle tracking

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Installing or self-managing a vehicle tracking solution sounds like such a simple thing to do, but like most things, there is much more to it, with many aspects to consider.



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Finding the perfect fit

While fleet managers want everything perfect from the get-go; it can take time to tweak certain features. What most companies sell to fleet managers is a perfectly working service. But, because of the complexity of this beat, some inexperienced fleet managers might have unrealistic expectations.

Generally, though, we've seen a number of tracking companies that have enough experience to manage expectations. While there can be teething problems with fleet installs and on-boarding, as long as these are quickly sorted, it can be a good experience for the customer. Having reliable SIM supply with quick activation is important to fulfil installations on time.

SIM management

SIM management can appear easy when you start working with a small fleet but, in fact, a number of things need to come together perfectly, and collectively – which is unlikely at the outset. These include robust and reliable technology; mobile SIMs that operate via best-possible connectivity; and an experienced SIM support team.

Over our decade of experience in SIM management for vehicle-tracking installations, it's become clear that fleet managers and transport companies want a simple, reliable and cost-effective SIM solution. This requires a high degree of flexibility, creativity and open-mindedness, for all parties involved.



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Tracking companies have specific requirements from an M2M connectivity viewpoint, and we've had to add specific features to our service, built up over years of assisting with SIM-connectivity queries. This includes SIM-level reporting, hard spend caps and SIM location triangulation (to get the SIM location even when the GPS is off). Because devices are typically not physically reachable, remote troubleshooting is vital.

Managing cost and risk

While mobile SIM management is a key enabler of a successful tracking operation, both cost and risk need to be watched too. Typically, the cheapest option carries most risk, and vice versa, we've found that customers don't like to be tied into inflexible, long-term contracts – so we avoid this way of working.

Companies should also ensure that they own the physical SIM (i.e. RICA'd in their company name), so that it can be switched between solutions without having to swap it out; which can be a costly exercise when you're dealing with hundreds, maybe thousands, of SIMs at a time.

The challenge of roaming

An important last consideration is the challenges roaming can pose. Roaming is complex, even on a mobile-network level. In real life, SIMs often underperform – even if a customer has done everything right. Examples include when roaming in a country is paused due to non-payment, or technical errors.

“ Because roaming spend can shoot up quickly on a single SIM, it is again important to partner with a company that understands, and has detailed experience of, all the available options; including being able to monitor data usage in real-time. ”

It is so important to select the correct SIM management partner. They should be able to advise the tracking or fleet manager on the best way to proceed for his own unique set of applications – be it to choose to take a local or a global roaming SIM; which network offers the best functionality and rates; essential technical infrastructure for optimal data flow to a server; risks related to spending caps and more.

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